

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows (**a marked-up copy of the amended claims is provided at the end of this amendment**):

24. (Amended - Clean Copy) A battery comprising an electrode plate unit, the electrode plate unit including:

a group of electrode plates comprising a plurality of positive electrode plates and a plurality of negative electrode plates that are alternately stacked upon one another with intervening separators therebetween, wherein:

edges of said plurality of positive electrode plates protrude beyond edges of said plurality of negative electrode plates on one side of said group of electrode plates, and

edges of said plurality of negative electrode plates protrude beyond edges of said plurality of positive electrode plates on an opposite side of said group of electrode plates;

a positive electrode collector plate attached to said protruding edges of said plurality of positive electrode plates and having a plurality of parallel positive electrode collector plate channels each having raised edges protruding beyond a plane defined by said positive electrode collector plate, said raised edges of said positive electrode collector plate channel

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channels on a side of said positive electrode collector plate attached to said protruding edges of said plurality of positive electrode plates; and

a negative electrode collector plate attached to said protruding edges of said plurality of negative electrode plates and having a plurality of parallel negative electrode collector plate channels each having raised edges protruding beyond a plane defined by said negative electrode collector plate, said raised edges of said negative electrode collector plate channels on a side of said negative electrode collector plate attached to said protruding edges of said plurality of negative electrode plates.

25. (Amended - Clean Copy) The battery according to claim 24, wherein at least one of a said positive electrode collector plate channel and a said negative electrode collector plate channel extends along a respective at least one positive electrode collector plate and said negative electrode collector plate, in a direction substantially parallel to the direction in which said positive electrode plates and said negative electrode plates are stacked.

26. (Amended - Clean Copy) The battery according to claim 24, wherein said positive electrode collector plates and said negative electrode collector plates are made of one of nickel sheet and nickel-plated steel sheet.

28. (Amended - Clean Copy) The battery according to claim 27, wherein:

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said solder material is configured to be applied to said positive and negative electrode collector plates prior to being applied to said protruding edges of said plurality of positive and negative electrode plates; and

said solder material is configured to be reflowed after being applied in said channels of said positive and negative electrode collector plates.

29. (Amended - Clean Copy) A battery comprising an electrode plate unit, the electrode plate unit including:

a plurality of positive electrode plates and a plurality of negative electrode plates that are alternately stacked upon one another with intervening separators therebetween; and

an electrode collector plate attached to protruding edges of at least one of said plurality of positive electrode plates and said plurality of negative electrode plates;

a plurality of bent portions, each bent portion of said plurality of bent portions respectively formed on an edge of said protruding edges, wherein not all of said bent portions on a said edge are uniform in length.

30. (Amended - Clean Copy) A battery comprising an electrode plate unit, the electrode plate unit including:

a group of electrode plates comprising a plurality of positive electrode plates and a plurality of negative electrode plates that are alternately stacked upon one another with intervening separators therebetween, wherein:

edges of said plurality of positive electrode plates protrude beyond edges of said plurality of negative electrode plates on one side of said group of electrode plates, each said edge of said edges of said plurality of positive electrode plates having a slit therein; and

edges of said plurality of negative electrode plates protrude beyond edges of said plurality of positive electrode plates on an opposite side of said group of electrode plates, each said edge of said edges of said plurality of negative electrode plates having a slit therein;

a positive electrode collector plate attached to said protruding edges of said plurality of positive electrode plates and having a plurality of parallel positive electrode collector plate channels each having by raised edges protruding beyond a plane defined by said positive electrode collector plate, said raised edges of said positive electrode collector plate channels on a side of said positive electrode collector plate attached to said protruding edges of said plurality of positive electrode plates; and

a negative electrode collector plate attached to said protruding edges of said plurality of negative electrode plates and having a plurality of parallel negative electrode collector plate channels each having raised edges protruding beyond a plane defined by said negative electrode collector plate, said raised edges of said negative electrode collector plate channel

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on a side of said negative electrode collector plate attached to said protruding edges of said plurality of negative electrode plates.

31. (Amended - Clean Copy) A battery comprising an electrode plate unit, the electrode plate unit including:

a plurality of positive electrode plates and a plurality of negative electrode plates that are alternately stacked upon one another with intervening separators therebetween, lead portions of each of said plurality of positive electrode plates and lead portions of each of said plurality of negative electrode plates extending along a respective edge thereof;

a collector plate attached to said lead portions of at least one of said plurality of positive electrode plates and said plurality of negative electrode plates; and

a plurality of bent portions, each bent portion of said plurality of bent portions respectively formed on a said edge of said plurality of positive electrode plates and said plurality of negative electrode plates, wherein not all of said bent portions on a said edge are uniform in length,

wherein said lead portions comprise a locator configured to position said edges of at least one of said positive electrode plates and said negative electrode plates with respect to said collector plate.

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34. (Amended - Clean Copy) The battery according to claim 24, further comprising a planar portion extending between adjacent said channels of at least one of said positive electrode collector plate and said negative electrode collector plate.

35. (Amended - Clean Copy) The battery according to claim 30, further comprising a planar portion extending between adjacent said channels of at least one of said positive electrode collector plate and said negative electrode collector plate.